The Hun-Turk Traffic in Little Girls

Eight Thousand Sold At Auction in One Week

By MAY BOSMAN

A FEW years ago, in the University of Pennsylvania Museum in Philadelphia, I met a young girl who might have stepped off one of the cracked old vases from some ancient Biblical land. She was a true Oriental type; looking at her, one wondered how many thousands and thousands of years the strain in her extended backward that had caused to be born again so definite and pronounced a cast of features.

She was only twenty and had come to this country in the steerage when she was ten years old. She had had only such education as free America gives in its public schools; yet she was custodian of tomes used only by erudite professors and bespectacled post-graduates—and she knew her books.

Because she had been a distinct help to a hurried newspaper writer I was grateful and asked her to visit me. She cried: "No, no! I cannot, for none could come to see me at my house! It is so crowded, so small and dark. And there are babies. You fall over them on the floor. Or if not babies, it is my grandmother. She is ninety and blind. And the house does not smell clean, and it is never quiet!"

"You have a large family, then?" I ventured.

"Immense!" she answered promptly. "There is always a crowd; and a new baby. We have twelve children and six grandchildren — my brothers *would* marry—and a grandmother and mother and father."

"Houses," said I, "are small for a family so large!"

She fixed me with her great, sombre, beautiful eyes. "Rooms, not houses," she returned quickly; "two of them in the back yard of a tenement are indeed small for any family!"

I covered my impolite astonishment as best I could.

The House of Swinging Doors

On a day not long after that there was talk of an expedition to Syria, and she knew some of the men and women who were going. Her face lighted.

"They must occupy our house on the side of a mountain there," she cried. "It is large and airy, there are barns and outhouses, and fruits growing wild. The doors are swinging in the wind and inside all is in order, waiting our recoming. The beds are made; the linen is newly changed; the rooms are swept and dusted and garnished. Old neighbors do it," she explained. "In the cellar are dried herbs and vegetables, fagots for fires, coal and books. It will hold a large company, this house of my father and my father's father, and our relatives and friends will bid you welcome there!"

"Why did you leave that house and come to America?" I gasped.

She smiled, that melancholy, inscrutable smile of her race.

"We are Christians," she said, "and we had treasure stored away. Then, my sister was lovely, and I was not thought ill-favored. Still — the terrible Turks did not live near us. For many years we thought that we were safe. When my father met them in business in the city he made friends with them—but he kept us hidden. Little girls are never safe in the Turks' country!

"But one day a Turk spoke to my father in the market place, and he spoke of us. My father parried, but it was too late; some treacherous one had told of my sister. My father came home and said to my mother: 'Thou must always keep things packed against our sudden going away now!'

"One night there was a great knocking at our door and my father rose from his bed. In the rain stood one of our neighbors from the other side of the mountain. He had ridden half the night. A company of Turks had stopped at his house the evening before, and they were asleep there now. They had asked the direction to my father's house.

Treasure and Wealth— Then Terror in the Night

"So he called our mother and we were roused, while my oldest brother and the neighbor ran to harness the horses and put them to the wagons. We dressed in great haste and caught up what treasures we might. But we had no time to spare, and our good neighbor himself was in grave danger. Long before daylight we were on our way to a seaport and new life in America. We were cold and hungry and frightened, for there was danger until we should be upon the ship and well out from land.

"But, you see, what was treasure and wealth in our mountain home was nothing—in America! We live—as I told you. But some day we shall go back."

"When will you go?" I asked. "Will you go with the expedition?"

She shuddered. "We cannot go," she sighed, "while the Turks are still there!"

All this was said before the war, before the Turks had massacred her cousins, the whole Armenian people, and carried little Serbian girls into slavery. She said it while she and I and others still thought well of those clumsy, painstaking Germans who were deciphering tablets and columns that had been unearthed in ancient lands and were writing ponderous volumes about them.

I do not know what she would say today, for I do not know what has become of her. But I do know that there has come, between that day and this, a time when little girls cannot be wrested so easily from the grasp of the terrible Turk. In 1915 Germany and her allies set out to annihilate the whole Serbian male population — and did not succeed. But they did clear Serbia of them and took possession of the country—left a country of women and children.

Little Girls Sold at Auction

Thereupon the German military officers in command of the Turks went into the Serbian houses and collected the prettiest of the little girls — 8,000 in one week, from ten to fourteen years of age—and sold them in the market places to Turkish buyers.

The Turk Is Conquered But His Harem Remains

These children, when they had been sold, were sent, shrieking and begging for release, in great train loads toward Constantinople. Heaven alone knows how many more than 8,000 are to-day in Turkish harems! The German officers themselves made no secret of the little girls' destination.

Turkish women are emancipated; they have grown beyond the harem stage. They refuse to be shut up in rooms and gardens, however beautiful, to be the playthings of a man. They are firm believers in monogamy now.

But the Turk is unchanged. And this war, with the help of his arch-conspirator, the German, has filled his harems—for the time being, anyway.

That they have been filled with little girls who should still be at their dolls—with mere babies as white and civilized as those who play in your own and your neighbors' yards—must strike horror unutterable to the heart of every one who reads!

The Serbians have not been duly appreciated and pitied in this war. They are coming into their own at last. Can we bring back their little girls from Turkish harems—those who have not died of grief and shame? It is not too late to try to atone for our selfish indifference to these horrors that we ignored before the war.

What the Law Allows: Adopting a Child

By ROSE FALLS BRES
Attorney at Law

Editor's Note.—In the midst of war or peace there still remain the children to be thought of—and here in New York a pathetic group of them now claims your sympathy. These are the hundreds of little ones left orphaned by the influenza epidemic. Many of them are very ill themselves, and do not even know that they have lost their parents; for the epidemic attacked adults first, and then began its slaughter among the children.

At a conference of managers of child-caring institutions held recently at the request of Dr. Royal S. Copeland, city Health Commissioner, it was decided that these small convalescents will be kept in Bellevue Hospital and in the hospital ship of St. John's Guild, anchored in the East River off Twenty-third Street, until they have recovered sufficiently to be taken to Seaside Hospital on Staten Island. Those who have been exposed to the disease, but have not contracted it, will go to Seaside Hospital on Coney Island until the danger of infection is over.

And then? Then, if no one wants them, they will have to be committed to institutions.

But Commissioner Copeland will first make a strenuous effort to find ready-made families for the orphans. He is receiving applications now from those who wish to adopt them, and wants at the same time reports to be made to him at his office in the Board of Health Building, Walker and Centre streets, of any children left homeless or destitute by the epidemic.

There is a word for motherless, fatherless children; but no expression has ever been coined for the childless mother or father. And there are many of them —those who have lost their sons and daughters and those who wanted and should have had children, and never did.

Here is a wonderful chance for both the childless and the orphans to come into their own. M. de M.

IF YOU find a money wallet or bit of jewelry you send it to a "Lost and Found" department or take it along and advertise for the owner, depending on where you acquired it. In time, advertising and other formalities having been observed, if the owner does not materialize, title to the article may be claimed by the finder.

But if the bundle you pick up from the highway or your doorstep sends out a wail and proves to be a future citizen of the great State of New York, then time and advertising will not serve to provide legal ownership. John Doe, jr., if a parentless waif, may be a mere nobody from the social viewpoint, but he has certain inalienable rights. You may love him and pet him and clothe him at will, parental title evading you still. For the law gives parental custody, rights and guardianship in a ready-made family only by a decree of a court of competent jurisdiction. This decree is the final step in "legal adoption."

Phillips Brooks said: "He who helps a child helps humanity with a distinctness, with an immediateness, which no other help given in any other stage of human life can possibly give." Parentless John Doe's sole hope of social status rests upon the adoption laws, which provide the legal ways and means by which he may be taken into a family, endowed with its name and with title to all the rights and hereditaments of a son of the blood.

Adoption—And All The Legal "Ifs"

Not only waifs and foundlings clamor at the hearts and consciences of women with homes, but a daily increasing army of children made dependent by war and the conditions it has created. Without reason, everything connected with a court proceeding awes and frightens the law abiding—especially women. Yet a close acquaintance with the manner of legally adopting a child or children shows it is without any fearsome elements. Requirements for joining a church or club are every bit as onerous.

Any married couple, both being adults, may adopt a child or children if able to provide a home and good moral atmosphere. Either may adopt if the consent of the other is obtained. If the child is more than twelve years of age it is necessary to have his or her consent also.

If the minor to be adopted has a parent possible to locate, who has not been adjudged insane or deprived of civil rights or divorced for certain causes, then the consent of such parent must be obtained.

If the child is one of the foundlings taken over by the city, then only the consent of the city's representative is required. The person or persons seeking to adopt must appear before the court for examination, and at this juncture the examining official looks beyond the social status, cash in bank, assured income and the religious predilections of the would-be parents, and wants to know that the child being passed on "for better or worse" will receive kind treatment. The rich man of to-day may be the poor man of to-morrow, so there can be no financial security; but the conscientious judge or surrogate rejects the application of irresponsible persons in an effort to assure every normal child a normal chance.

What To Do To Adopt a Child

Stripped of prolixity, the following document recently filed in the Surrogates' Court of New York City shows the simplicity of the proceeding:

The petition of John Blank and his wife, Mary Blank, respectfully shows:

That both are more than twenty-one years of age and reside——.

That the minor the petitioners want to adopt was born in 1905, the day being unknown, as he was abandoned and placed in . . . a foundling asylum of Palermo, Italy, as shown by the memorandum from the said asylum annexed hereto.

That your petitioners have had custody of said child without interruption since its infancy. That neither the father nor mother of the said infant has ever inquired about him. That your petitioners lived in Portinico, Italy, for three years after assuming custody of the child and then came to this country to live.

That your petitioners are good, home-loving people, have a small farm and $2,000 in the bank.

That your petitioners are desirous of adopting the said minor as their lawful child.

That there is annexed hereto the instrument required by Section 112 of the Domestic Relations Laws of the City of New York, signed and executed by those whose consent is necessary.

Wherefore, petitioners pray that the Surrogate of New York County entertain the proceedings for adoption of said minor and that an order be granted, filed and recorded allowing and confirming said adoption and directing that the said Giovanni Blank shall hereafter be known and treated in all respects as petitioners' lawful child.

To this petition was attached an affidavit of the petitioners, their covenant to care for and educate the child, and the written consent of the minor (being more than twelve years of age) to the adoption.

By this simple proceeding the orphan from Palermo became the legal son and heir of his parents by adoption.

That there are many persons who seek children to adopt is shown by the "waiting list" at orphanages. There are at present two hundred persons whose names and addresses are listed at a single institution maintained by the city who wait an opportunity to adopt a child or children.

"Boarding Out" Versus Institutions

In June of 1916 the Department of Charities of the City of New York established a Children's Home Bureau, in order better to carry out the provisions of the poor law, using it as a clearing house through which to place children in homes instead of institutions, there being at that time 20,000 dependent children cared for, at an annual expense of more than $5,000,000. Thereafter, and until the present administration went back very largely to the old manner of placing children, the younger dependent children of New York were given over to the case of foster mothers. The placing out of dependent orphans with paid-by-the-month mothers is no experiment, for in 1909 there was held in Washington, D. C., a conference with two hundred representatives of the several religious faiths, to which asylums, aid societies and juvenile courts brought their experience and observations, and after the welfare of children of all kinds and conditions had been given consideration, the following conclusion was announced:

As to children who for sufficient reason must be removed from their own homes, or who have no homes, it is desirable that, if normal in mind and body and not requiring special training, they should be cared for in families wherever practicable. The carefully selected foster home is for the normal child the best substitute for the natural home.

But the dependent child to-day in New York City is very lucky indeed if he chances to be placed with a paid-by-the-month-mother, instead of finding a permanent crib and home in an institution.

Tested—Tagged—and Given a Faith!

The physical being of homeless babies who come to the city for support is the first object of attention, for, be it understood, waifs are committed to Bellevue, there to be subjected to certain blood tests and weight standards and other theoretical and practical routine very mysterious to the medically uninformed, but necessary to establish the kind of tag and number to which little John Doe is entitled in order to be properly card-indexed and historically placed.

Not only does the city weigh and test and measure and clothe the waif, but he is given a religious brand thusly: One baby is christened Catholic and the next Protestant in never varying alternation, and the path along which the little soul is started toward Kingdom Come depends on whether his predecessor drew a Catholic or Protestant faith card in the lottery.

The infants who are sent from Bellevue to the institution previously mentioned are as clerically well kept as so many accounts of a good merchant. There are five visiting nurses, who regularly call at homes where the children are sent, and the clerk who has charge of a filing case filled with "records" can immediately tell the "history" of any of her wards by reference to the index. She shuffles the cards and there flash lines: "Blond baby, plump, cheerful." "Infant emaciated and cross. Dark eyes and black hair, very irritable." "Red hair and brown eyes, healthy," and so on, proving that babies without real mothers to note each smile and wail may still be sure of reaching health standards.

"The Talmud" says: "The blessed man 'that doeth righteousness at all times' is the man who brings up an orphan." Regiments in France are "adopting" little orphaned-by-the-war children, associations in America are "adopting" little folk in France and Belgium, who will remain in their loved, if ravaged, home surroundings, and who will be cared for and educated there by funds sent from here by the adopting associations.

Our Children Whom We Never See

Women whose hearts are big and whose incomes can be stretched to do a little more are "adopting" daughters and sons in Europe whom they will never see, but who will wear warm clothes, and go to school, and be enabled to go on living in the wreck of their homeland because of the monthly remittances sent by their godmothers. And the only recompense to these godmothers will be occasional photographs of their wards and the certainty of a recordation of their good deeds, which must have been carried heavenward on the prayers of these little ones.

These are what might be termed sentimental adoptions, for the children so adopted will have no legal claim on the good men and women who are thus reaching out to them a helping hand. But the problem of saving as many children as possible from the unhappy fate of institutional life can be solved only by broad campaigning for homes for homeless children. There is room in good houses, comfortable if not luxurious homes, for thousands of waifs and dependent children, and those who would acquire a ready made family will find the court proceeding for legal adoption one of the simplest forms known to the law. Women's clubs might do an immense and generous work for humanity by discussing adoption and rubbing from it the absurd dislike and almost superstitious fear of its legal aspect.

There might be found some better way of bringing together the children who need homes and the homes which need children, thus curtailing the waiting lists now rather hopelessly filed with public institutions.

For there seems as much need of a way to get the children as finding homes for them. Mrs. Brown wakes up to the selfishness of maintaining a big house filled only with furniture and servants, and concludes she will adopt a son or daughter. Full of high resolve, she calls on her friend, Mrs. Smith, and confides her resolution, only to be told that she needn't mind, for she, Mrs. Smith, has been on the "waiting list" of an institution for six months or a year hoping to be given a child to adopt.

Mrs. Brown may do the next best thing: she may "adopt" one of the orphans in France and get a little comfort in sending assistance to a child who needs and deserves it; but her home remains empty, and somewhere in an institution in the great City of New York a child is being kept who could enjoy it.

We Are Seven—We Are One

By EVANGELINE BOOTH
Commander of the Salvation Army in America

THERE is one task and only one for war relief organizations to perform at the battlefront: It is the task of minimizing in every way possible

Photo by Ira L. Hill's Studio

the hardships and sufferings that inevitably befall combatants in war.

To such a task it is the solemn duty of all right-thinking and loyal persons to dedicate their hearts, their hands, their heads—and their lives. If they cannot go as far as that they should never enter upon war relief work, and if they cannot organize themselves for the undertaking in a mental sense they will never be fit for it in a physical sense.

All personal and private leanings, whether they pertain to the Church, politics, social ethics or the imaginary lines of caste, should be swept aside in the crisis of war, and the guiding thought should be—service! Common sense and practicability are as essential to the right sort of relief work behind the lines as bullets and bayonets are in the first line of contact with the enemy. War relief that is to command the respect and confidence of armies must be rooted in a genuine determination to help without giving hindrance. It can best be done by the practical organizations, qualifying under the rules of common sense, as a unified whole. If it was good for the Allies to weld their giant armies and navies into one vast unit and place them under one control, it is good for the war relief organizations to adopt the same policy—for in unity there is strength!

The Allies Are Under One Head

When the armies of the Allies were placed under General Foch, and the strategy of war was left, so far as the Allies were concerned, to a single war council, it was not found necessary to erase the marks of identity from any unit. French soldiers remained just as French as ever they had been. The British Tommies are still their old selves. The Americans, assuredly, forfeited none of their individuality as the most marvellous fighting machine, put together overnight, in the history of mankind.

Yet they suddenly became cogs in a vast machine. They toiled and struggled for a common purpose. And when General Foch finally was cloaked with the authority and power which enabled him to direct the forces of righteousness, each contingent working in its place without duplication or confusion, that instant Germany was beaten!

President Wilson, early in the war, pleaded for, toiled for, contended for coordination. He knew it meant increased efficiency. He did not encourage one ambitious element to swallow up or obliterate another and a lesser element, just to make a unit. He insisted that each organized force locate itself in the vast machine of a country's weal, to gear in and to operate. Such a machine should require no lubrication beyond the liberal application of brain power. Such a machine should be incapable of waste motion, useless pretence, vain assumptions or a spirit of competition and rivalry, and should smoothly grind out its grist, or, failing to do so, it should forthwith be sent to the scrapheap of Mistaken Ideals and Good Intentions!

The Salvation Army is of all creeds, and yet of none of them. Thus it was entirely natural for the organization I have the honor to command in the United States, and which, with its millions of officers and members is deep-rooted in sixty-one countries on this earth, to fit into place and begin, in its own sphere, to do its humblest part.

One Cause, One War, One Issue—One Result

The Salvation Army has been fighting evil and poverty since the day the organization was founded, nearly sixty years ago. It is in war work now because its duty calls it wherever there is human suffering to relieve. It has furnished over 100,000 actual fighters for the Allies in the trenches, and has but a small force back of the red line which marks the shifting edges of contact—1,200 uniformed workers. But each and all will be proud to lay down their lives if that is necessary—which is, as we see it, the spirit of service.

There is still more to be done at the front for our men than we can ever do. We owe it to the mothers and fathers of America to cast aside all thought of divisional lines; of imaginary boundaries and barriers of ambition and of prejudice. It behooves us to dig right in and do the things that will best serve the fighters, all within military regulations and upon a common sense basis, and to stay there with the troops until they return. Nobody should get any credit—which means that everybody should get it.

This is the spirit of the seven great war relief organizations our President has commissioned to do this big thing—the spirit in which they have stuck alongside the boys sent to do the battling, and helped them materially and spiritually to withstand the greatest ordeal in the world's history—to overcome the greatest monster of evil that has ever reared its head. We seven will do the job, mothers and fathers! Trust us! Help us! We are seven—we are one!

Waacs—and Others

THE war services of British women have been recognized by the award of many foreign orders and decorations. A recent issue of "The London Gazette" recorded that King George has granted permission to Miss Henrietta Fraser to wear the Cross of the Legion of Honor and the Croix de Guerre conferred upon her by the President of the French Republic, to Miss Muriel Thompson to wear the Cross of Chevalier of the Order of Leopold II conferred upon her by the King of the Belgians, and to Miss Frances Lathem to wear the Insignia of the Fifth Class of the Order of St. Seva, confered upon her by the King of Serbia.

THE members of Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps now have their own school in London, says the British Bureau of Information, the first of many such training establishments which the British authorities propose to open for the education of women clerks for the army. The pioneer school has been organized by the London County Council at the request of the War Office, and it owes its inception to the fact that clerical workers are wanted in enormous numbers for the corps.

Many women and girls, in their patriotic zeal to be of service to their country, have volunteered for the domestic side of the corps when a very little technical training is all they require to fit them for service on the clerical staff, and this is now being provided in an extensive course in office routine, bookkeeping, English, typewriting and, not least important, the intricacies of filling up army forms.